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**Written Testimony
State Comptroller Kevin Lembo
Appropriations Budget Hearing for PCSW
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Senator Harp, Representative Walker, Senator Kane and Representative Miner:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony for the budget hearing for the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW).

The state of Connecticut has distinguished itself as a national legislative policy leader by passing laws that have a direct impact on diverse constituencies. Connecticut's independent advocacy agencies have been instrumental in helping to make these laws a reality not only by providing research and information on the subject matter, but also by being the voice of those populations affected and often disenfranchised.

PCSW, in particular, provides an important service to the people of Connecticut. Their solid research and data analysis on all matters affecting Connecticut women help guide the Connecticut General Assembly in creating laws that make the state one of the best for women to live. They respond to hundreds of calls from the public seeking information on state laws and services on topics ranging from divorce rights to safe havens for battered women. Further, the agency assists individuals who wish to file sex discrimination complaints with the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) and also holds discrimination awareness, investigation and trainings for Equal Employment Opportunity officers (EEO).

The contributions PCSW makes to the state are numerous and have a lasting impact on the lives of women. The loss of their independent voice in important and open conversations would be strongly felt.